

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

### METHOD, APPARATUS, AND PROGRAM FOR SEPARATE REPRESENTATIONS OF FILE SYSTEM LOCATIONS FROM REFERRING FILE SYSTEMS

5 A first file system includes a data object that  
references a second file system. The data object can be  
a new or existing file type with data identifying the  
second file system or some of its properties. The data  
required to locate the second file system is stored in a  
10 file system location data structure that may be located  
outside the first file system. The data object may then  
contain a key value, such as a name or a number,  
identifying the second file system, that can be used to  
look up the file system location. A referencing server  
15 may encode the file system identification and include the  
encoded file system identification rather than a path.  
When a server receives a request with a path that is  
encoded, the server decodes the file system  
identification. Then, the server may locate the root of  
20 the file system identified by the file system  
identification and return the root object to the client.  
Location of the root can be done either by accessing the  
file system location data structure or by using another  
data structure. A root referral object is the top level  
25 object in all participating file servers. It contains a  
referral to a root file system identification, which is  
the root file system. Since all participating file

systems contain the same root file system identification,  
all clients will view the same name space regardless of  
which file server is initially contacted.

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